

Meet Duxbury

Susan Sullivan
Duxbury High School, Social Studies Dept.

BY: JP O'NEIL,
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**Susan Sullivan teaches a variety of courses
in the DHS social studies department.**

After 10 years of working at Duxbury High School, Susan Sullivan has made quite the impact. She first started working for the Duxbury Public School System as a substitute teacher, but now teaches history, human behavior and courses on the Holocaust.

"I subbed at all the schools because I wanted to see what grade level I would be most interested in teaching and be the most effective," Sullivan said. "I really loved high school kids. I loved talking to kids that were on their way into the world. I had a great connection with the older kids."

Sullivan was inspired by her kids to become a teacher. All three of her children went to school in Duxbury and she said they enjoyed it. Her husband has also been coaching in Duxbury since 1995 and currently serves as the varsity coach for girls' basketball. Sullivan knew that Duxbury would be the perfect fit for her to teach.

"I always wanted to be a teacher so I went back to school at 40 and went on to graduate from Lesley University, receiving my Bachelors in American studies. Then, when I was 50, I received a Masters from UMass Boston in education and secondary education," Sullivan said. "It was a great decision for me and I have enjoyed every second of teaching."

The idea of communicating with kids is the best thing for Sullivan.

"I love when the kids get excited about learning something new or doing something good for other people," Sullivan said. "The other teachers are also all very nice, and the staff in the office is great too. The kids have great role models in the school."

Sullivan said everyone at the school puts a lot of effort into what they do.

"I don't think people realize how much time teachers put into their job," Sullivan said. "My husband tells me to go to bed at 11:30 p.m. because I'll still be working. It's so much more than just the school day."

A typical day for Sullivan involves a lot of planning, with different classes each day due to the rotating schedule, and a

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**Inside the new Duxbury High School/Middle School
where Sullivan teaches courses in social studies.**

Photo by Aaron Carr

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prep period during the school day. After school there are usually meetings between the faculty, the departments or students.

Two of Sullivan's favorite elective classes of many high school students include Holocaust 1 and 2. Holocaust 1 has been around for a long time but Sullivan took the next step by creating Holocaust 2 about five years ago. Holocaust 1 focuses on the Holocaust, while Holocaust 2 focuses more on genocides in general and helping outside organizations such as Wounded Warriors and the Boys and Girls Club in Dorchester.

"We also will be working on the Humanitarian (African Service) project. Mike and Penny Herlihy are very involved with helping us connect with schools in Africa," Sullivan said. "We will be working on a new clean water project, and raising money for local food pantries. There are a lot of humanitarians in this school."

Sullivan said she loves to help people in any way she can.

“All my life I’ve always sided with the victim, I think about why these things would happen to them,” she said. “I can’t help but think ‘what can I do?’ And you see in movies where one person can make a difference. Raising money and awareness can be done by the kids and I. We can sell bracelets and get information out on social media. One person can make a difference, but many people can move mountains.”

In terms of her career, Sullivan is happy to be in the place she is now.

“Maybe I wish I had started younger, I’ve only been teaching for 10 years, but I wouldn’t trade being at home with my kids for anything,” Sullivan said. “I got to see every piece of their life as they grew up. We are still very close today.” Although she has moved out of Duxbury now, her most cherished physical place in town is the beach. But her favorite thing about the town is the people who live in it. “There are some amazing people and families here,” Sullivan said. “The community of Duxbury is unlike any other town.”